

Pemayetv Emahakv, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting

March 23, 2022

Present: Mitchell Cypress, Mariann Billie, Larry L. Howard, Christopher Osceola, Jim Shore, Lee Zepeda, Tracy Downing, Bryan Granie, Michele Thomas, Matthew Galvin, Will Latchford, Rosanna Bencosme, Dr. Kiswani

In the Chairman and Vice Chairman's absence, Mr. Shore advised present Board of Trustee Members to select a member to conduct the meeting. Trustee Member Larry L. Howard was selected and called the meeting to order. Lee Zepeda gave the invocation, and Michele Thomas conducted roll call. Mr. Howard asked Board Members review minutes from the December 16, 2021 meeting. Mr. Howard asked for comments or questions, then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mariann Billie made a motion, seconded by Christopher Osceola. Minutes were approved.

Vice-Chairman Mitchell Cypress arrived. Michele Thomas asked Mr. Shore how to proceed and he recommended Mr. Howard should continue conducting the meeting.

Mr. Howard introduced item number five, resolution to approve Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School Drug Free Workplace Statement. Ms. Downing presented said resolution. Mr. Howard asked for questions or comments. No questions or concerns were raised, Mr. Howard then asked for a motion to approve. A motion was made by Mitchell Cypress, seconded by Mariann Billie and was passed unanimously.

Discussion Items -

Business Lease/Service Agreement Update -

Ms. Downing reminded Board Members at the last meeting she gave an update that the Business Lease Agreement and Service Agreement were being worked on by Jennifer Kolakowski. Ms. Kolakowski is working to terminate the existing Brighton Charter School Lease and issue a new Business Lease Agreement because the Charter School will be expanding their current boundary due to the new Culture/Immersion Building construction. As part of the new Business Lease, we are working with Matthew Galvin and independent counsel to include a Service Agreement between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School to facilitate maintenance, capital projects, technology, and other services. Ms. Downing reported on March 7th, 2022, she, Mr. Galvin, Mr. Granie along with independent counsel reviewed a proposed Business Lease Agreement sent to them by Jennifer Kolakowski and Erica Ashton, Staff Attorney for the Seminole Tribe of Florida which includes redlines provided by independent counsel. There are references to the potential Service Agreement. In the event the Business Lease Agreement is finalized and approved, we will develop a Service Agreement to facilitate maintenance, capital projects, technology, and other services. As we move forward, Ms. Downing will provide updates.

School Update -

PECS Salary Schedule -

Ms. Downing reported at the last school board meeting she felt it was important to make Board Members aware that HB 641's Teacher Salary Increase provision calling for the beginning teacher salary to increase to \$47,500 or as close to that amount as possible given the money the state allocated for the adjustment, this has prompted all districts to adjust their salary schedules. As a result, our teachers at some steps on our salary schedule, in some districts, are making less money than teachers in other districts. Ms. Downing reported at the beginning of this school year she had a teacher resign to take a position in Palm Beach County because it paid more and she needed to provide around the clock care to her husband who suffered a stroke. I have been approached by three teachers on campus who live closer to other schools about the salary schedule in Hendry County paying as much as \$7,000 more at step 30. At the last school board meeting, I told you it was my intention to pull salary schedules for five surrounding districts to do a comparison analysis. You recommended that we also compare PECS salary to Ahfachkee's salary schedule and present that information to you. I have shared that information with Mr. Zepeda's office with the exception of the Ahfachkee salary, which Ms. Downing did not have access to, but Mr. Zepeda did. Mr. Zepeda and Mr. Granie have offered to share the spreadsheet Ms. Downing created, and they can speak to you about the disparity they saw when comparing the PECS salary schedule to other schools. Ms. Downing went on to share the data showed a gap in our salary schedules and she knows PECS always took pride in paying more to recruit top teachers in the area. Mr. Zepeda confirmed there in fact are disparities between the PECS salary schedule and Ahfachkee salary schedule. New teachers both start at the same pay but by year four the gap and disparities begin to show up. Mr. Zepeda would like for both school salary schedules to be consistent, both schools serve tribal communities, so that would mean raising PECS salary schedule. He responded he would be meeting with Ms. Downing soon to work on making adjusts the PECS salary schedule so she is able to move forward with recruiting for the upcoming school year. Ms. Downing added that in speaking with Jeannette Merced at Charter School Associates she felt we can adjust our schedule to appropriately address this issue and still remain within our historical trend concerning state funding and tribal contributions.

Culture Immersion Building Update -

Ms. Downing reported she met with the Construction Managers on March 10th and we are at the point where we will begin seeing some activity on campus. The site will be secured, fencing will begin going up, cleaning will occur, and the site will be prepped for construction. Shortly thereafter, trailers and material containers will be delivered and put up behind the gym. Real construction will begin by April 15th, once the construction team is mobilized and all of the clearing, fencing, trailer, and materials are on site. Excavating will begin at this time whereby the low, boggy area behind the gym will be cleared out and dirt removed. In conjunction with the new building going up, we will begin working on expanding the cafeteria given that we are over capacity in the dining area when all students are present for breakfast.

The plan is to mirror the current cafeteria, kitchen, and teacher's lounge and the mirror image of the current building will be constructed where the Culture Immersion portables currently sit. During the summer, the portables will be moved to the low area just east of the media center and behind the PreK playground. Classes will be conducted there until they move into the newly constructed building. The portables will then be removed from our campus permanently. While the cafeteria is under construction, we will still be able to use the dining area since the work will not interfere with our lunch schedule. Much of the work will occur at night and in the kitchen area and not impact the current dining area. Since the current kitchen area will be under construction, a mobile kitchen will sit about 20 feet from the back kitchen area in the parking lot near gate 1D, which is the gate nearest to Harney Pond Road and the cafeteria. The back parking lot will also be doubled in size as a part of this project. The building design is modeled to resemble a chickee and will include a traditional camp, garden, and the retention pond will be turned into a fishing hole with a dock and small boat ramp. The entire project is slated to take place over the next 18 months with construction completed by October of 2023. The cafeteria expansion will be completed by December of 2022. Ms. Downing stated Mr. Howard has set the ground-breaking ceremony for May 5th. Mr. Howard confirmed that date and stated he would like a member of each family the new building is being dedicated to be present to say a few words. That would be the Jennie Shore, Late Louise Jones Gopher, and Late Lorene Bowers Gopher. Ms. Downing invited all Board Members to attend the ceremony.

Florida Department of Education Petition to Start a Native American Writing and Art Contest - Amy Carr and her 6th and 7th grade students have made it their mission to start a Native American Heritage Art and Writing Contest. They have started a petition and are asking our legislative leaders to create a Native American Heritage Art and Writing Contest because they want to honor their ancestors and bring about cultural awareness. The students are working closely with Tina Osceola, Director of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Paul Backhouse, and Kelly Chase of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Heritage and Environment Resource Office (HERO). Most recently, the students had a virtual meeting with Tina Osceola, Bernard Howard, Ms. Robinson, Gordon Wareham, Quenton Cypress, and Cypress Billie to discuss their Native American Heritage Month initiative and they participated in a question and answer session. They would like to plan a face-to-face session with the students to help them draft a formal letter and resolution and present it to the Council in person. Chairman Osceola has invited the students to the next Council meeting in April at the Veterans' Building to present their resolution. During the meeting, the students were told if the Council approves their resolution, they would like to take our students to Tallahassee to present this to the governor in person. On March 10th Mr. Backhouse announced that his contact with the state has approved the students presenting this to the First Lady's office with Council approval. Ms. Downing reported 396 people have signed the petition and the goal is to get 1,000 signatures and then thanked Mariann Billie for signing the petition. Marian Billie congratulated the students on their efforts and asked Ms. Downing to share the petition link again so she can share.

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Mr. Howard asked for closing comments before adjourning the meeting. No further comments were made so Mr. Howard call for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Christopher Osceola, seconded by Mariann Billie and was approved.